

Contemporary services like Spotify, which offers a large catalog of live-streaming music for free, give us a sense of what the future will look like: an endless amount of content, available anytime, on almost any device, and at little or no cost to users, with copyrights and revenue streams preserved. Long-standing barriers to entry for content creators are being flattened as well; just as YouTube can be said to launch careers today¹ (or at least offer fleeting fame), in the future, even more platforms will offer artists, writers, directors, musicians and others in every country the chance to reach a wider audience. It will still require skill to create quality content, but it will also be easier to assemble a team with the requisite skills to do this—say, an animator from South Korea, a voice actor from the Philippines, a storyboarder from Mexico and a musician from Kenya—and the finished product may have the potential to reach as wide an audience as any Hollywood blockbuster.

Entertainment will become a more immersive and personalized experience in the future. Integrated tie-ins will make today's product placements seem passive and even clumsy. If while watching a television show you spot a sweater you want or a dish you think you'd like to cook, information including recipes or purchasing details will be readily available, as will every other fact about the show, its story lines, actors and locations. If you're feeling bored and want to take an hour-long holiday, why not turn on your holograph box and visit Carnival in Rio? Stressed? Go spend some time on a beach in the Maldives. Worried your kids are becoming spoiled? Have them spend some time wandering around the Dharavi slum in Mumbai. Frustrated by the media's coverage of the Olympics in a different time zone? Purchase a holographic pass for a reasonable price and watch the women's gymnastics team compete right in front of you, live. Through virtual-reality interfaces and holographic-projection capabilities, you'll be able to "join" these activities as they happen and experience them as if you were truly there. Nothing beats the real thing, but this will be a very close second. And if nothing else, it will certainly be more affordable. Thanks to these new technologies, you can be more stimulated, or more relaxed, than ever before.

You'll be safer, too, at least on the road. While some of the very exciting new possibilities in transportation, like supersonic tube commutes and suborbital space travel, are still far in the distance,